

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

INFO ALL EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS

TRSY

USSAGE NKP

CINCPAC

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMCONSUL NHA TRANG

USDEL JEC PARIS

COGARD WASHDC

XMT AMEMBASSY SUVA

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

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COGARD FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: PFOR, XC, US

SUBJECT:AUGUST 26 EA PRESS SUMMARY

INDOCHINA

1. WP FRONTPAGES MCCOMBS (IN SAIGON) REPORT
THAT DIMINISHING US MIL AID TO GVN HAS FORCED
"SIGNIFICANT SHIFT" IN VIET POLICY OVER PAST
SEVERAL MONTHS, COMPELLING GVN TO ABANDON MIL
OUTPOSTS THROUGHOUT COUNTRY THAT IT NO LONGER
HAS RESOURCES TO DEFEND. MCCOMBS QUOTES OFFICIAL
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SAYING PRIVATELY: "WE'RE DRAWING BACK" TO STRONGER
LINES OF DEFENSE IN INTERIOR; "WE HAVE NO CHOICE."
OFFICIAL ALSO SAID POSITIONS ALONG HIGHWAYS ARE
BEING CONSOLIDATED AND OUTPOSTS IN RELATIVELY

SECURE AREAS ARE BEING CLOSED DOWN WHEN IT IS
JUDGED THEY ARE NOT ESSENTIAL.

WHILE OFFICIAL FIGURES NOT AVAILABLE, MCCOMBS'
SOURCES SAY 120 OF GVN'S APPROXIMATELY 3,000 MEKONG
OUTPOSTS HAVE BEEN SHUT DOWN RECENTLY, AND THERE
ARE TENTATIVE PLANS TO CLOSE MANY AS 500 MORE,
BUT UNKNOWN HOW SOON. DELTA APPEARS ONLY PLACE
WHERE CLOSINGS ARE OCCURRING IN SYSTEMATIC FASHION;
ELSEWHERE, OUTPOSTS BEING CLOSED AS MIL SITUATION
DICTATES OR PERMITS. VIET AND US OFFICIALS DECLINE

TO GIVE PRECISE FIGURES, BUT SAY AMOUNT OF AMMO AVAILABLE
TO SVN FORCES HAS GONE STEADILY DOWNWARD TO CRITICALLY
TIGHT LEVELS.

MCCOMBS SAYS TEN MONTHS AGO IT WAS EASY TO GATHER
STORIES FROM VIET PEASANTS AND SOLDIERS OF MASSIVE
ARTILLERY USED BY GOVT TROOPS, EVEN ON SMALL AND RELATIVES
INSIGNIFICANT OPERATIONS. BUT FOR LAST SEVERAL MONTHS
THIS KIND OF STORY COULD NO LONGER BE GATHERED, HAVING
BEEN REPLACED BY "EQUALLY CONVINCING" STORIES FROM
SOLDIERS ORDERED TO CONSERVE EVERY SHELL AND BULLET --
RESULT OF US CONGRESSIONAL ACTION LIMITING MIL AND
ECON AID TO GVN. SAYS APPREHENSIONS ABOUT SAIGON'S
WEAKNESS COME AT TIME WHEN THERE ARE THOUGHT TO
BE ROUGHLY 200,000 NVA FORCES IN SOUTH, EQUIPPED
WITH MORE TANKS, SOPHISTICATED WEAPONRY AND AMMO
THAN EVER BEFORE. "RELIABLE SOURCES" SAY SIX NVA
COMBAT DIVISIONS ARE IN RESERVE IN NVN; ONE POISED
ABOVE DMZ AND CAPABLE OF BEING FULLY COMMITTED
WITHIN TWO DAYS TO ACTION IN NORTHERN SVN, AND
FIVE OTHERS WITHIN SEVERAL DAYS TO SEVERAL WEEKS.

BUT IF AID CUTBACKS ARE FORCING SAIGON TO CLOSE
DOWN OUTPOSTS, THEY ARE ALSO FORCING GOVT FORCES
TO ADOPT SOME EFFECTIVE NEW TACTICS, ACCORDING
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MCCOMBS' SOURCES. EXAMPLE WAS ARVN'S RECENT SUCCESSFUL
USE OF SMALL INFANTRY PROBING ACTIONS AND SURROUNDING
AND CUTTING OFF ENEMY SUPPLIES WHEN COMMUNISTS
OCCUPIED HILLTOP NORTH OF DA NANG, RATHER THAN
POUNDING HILL WITH ARTILLERY AND AIR STRIKES.

2. AP SAIGON REPORTS CITE GVN COMMAND REPORT THAT
COMMUNIST GUNNERS SHELLED CROWDED HOA HOI MARKETPLACE
275 MILES NE OF SAIGON SUNDAY, KILLING 11 CIVILIANS
AND WOUNDING 22. TWENTY MILES NW OF DA NANG, COMMUNIST
GUNNERS FIRED MORE THAN 1,000 ROCKETS AND ARTILLERY
AND MORTAR ROUNDS AT GOVT POSITIONS, WOUNDING 11
ARVN. CLOSER TO DA NANG, GOVT FORCES SEEKING TO

LIFT VC PRESSURE ALONG HIGHWAY 1 WERE STILL ENGAGED
IN HEAVY FIGHTING (NYT, SUN, NYDN, GLOBE; WP).

3. UPI VIENTIANE REPORTS PL SENIOR OFFICIAL HAS
CONFIRMED THAT EMMET KAY WILL BE RELEASED SEPT.
12 WHEN OTHER POWS ARE EXCHANGED IN LAOS. PL SPOKESMAN
SAYS KAY TO BE FREED AS "HUMANITARIAN AND GOODWILL
GESTURE," EVEN THOUGH PL DOES NOT CONSIDER HIM
POW BUT "C-F VIOLATOR" (NYT, CHITRIB, NYDN, PHINQ;
WSJ).

4. GKR HIGH COMMAND ANNOUNCES FANK HAS KILLED
27 INSURGENTS AT PREK TAMEAK VILLAGE, 12 MILES
NE OF PP (WP, CHITRIB).

CHINA

5. CITING PUBLICITY ANNOUNCEMENT THAT IT IS "MOST
EXCITING EXHIBITION THAT'S EVER BEEN SEEN IN NORTH
AMERICA," CSM DISPATCH SAYS "THOSE ARE PRETTY STRONG
WORDS," BUT PRC EXHIBITION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDS
AT TORONTO'S ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM THROUGH NOV.
16 "PROMISES TO BE AN IMPORTANT ONE." STORY DESCRIBES
SOME OF EXHIBITS AND GIVES TICKET PRICES.

6. CSM'S BOURNE, IN BUCHAREST, SAYS SOVIET SOURCES
THERE HAVE CATEGORICALLY DISMISSED RUMORS OF POSSIBLE
HIGH-LEVEL THOUGH INFORMAL SINO-SOVIET CONTACT
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DURING ROMANIA'S RECENT ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS.
RUMORS WERE SPARKED BY PRESENCE OF KOSYGIN AT HEAD
OF VISITING SOVIET DELEGATION, AND ALTHOUGH PRC
DELEGATION INCLUDED NO ONE OF HIS EMINENCE, IT
WAS NONETHELESS STRONG ONE, LED BY VICE PREMIER
LI. BUT IF SINO-SOVIET MEETING IN BUCHAREST OF
KIND RUMORED SEEMS RULED OUT, INFORMED OBSERVERS
DO NOT PRECLUDE ORDINARY DIPLOMATIC CONTACTS LEADING
TO RESUMPTION OF BORDER NEGOTIATIONS.

WORLD POPULATION CONFERENCE

7. AP BUCHAREST REPORTS POLITICAL DIFFERENCES
RATHER THAN POPULATION PROBLEMS HAVE BEEN DOMINATING
DISCUSSION. ALBANIA HAS FOLLOWED PRC LEAD AND
DENOUNCED US AND USSR FOR USING POPULATION ISSUE
TO "BLACKMAIL" DEVELOPING NATIONS, CLAIMING RESOURCES
OF WORLD ARE "INEXHAUSTIBLE." NORTH AND SOUTH
KOREA HAVE TAKEN OPPORTUNITY TO ATTACK EACH OTHER;
AND ABSENCE OF VC AND CAMBODIA'S EXILED RGNU IS
RECURRING THEME VOICED BY THIRD WORLD NATIONS (SUN).

JAPAN

8. MUTSU, JAPAN'S FIRST NUCLEAR POWERED SHIP, STARTS 3 WEEKS OF LONG-DELAYED TESTS IN HEAVY WINDS AND RAIN AFTER FLEET OF 259 FISHING BOATS HAD EARLIER PREVENTED DEPARTURE. BLOCKADE BROKEN BY 35 MPH WINDS WHICH TEMPORARILY KEPT MUTSU IN PORT AS WELL. FISHERMEN WARN THAT NUCLEAR SHIP WILL CONTAMINATE WATERS OR THAT CONSUMERS, FEARING RADIATION, WILL SHUN THEIR CATCHES. MUTSU KEPT IDLE 2 YEARS DUE

TO PROTESTS (AP SUN, NYDN, NYT; WSJ; WP;GLOBE; AP PHOTO, NYT).

9. FINANCIAL SOURCES SAY JAPANESE AUTHORITIES HAVE WITHDRAWN 100 MILLION DOLS IN FOREIGN CURRENCY DEPOSITS FROM COMMERCIAL BANKS IN APPARENT REVERSAL OF RECENT POLICY MAKING NEW DEPOSITS AVAILABLE. LONDON SOURCES SAY WITHDRAWAL ROUTINE OPERATION UNCLASSIFIED

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ARISING FROM MATURING OF DEPOSITS, NOT NECESSARILY MARJING POLICY CHANGE (JOC).

10. JAPAN AND PRC HOPING TO BEGIN REGULAR TOKYO-PEKING AIR SERVICE VIA SHANGHAI ON SEPT 29, DATE TWO COUNTRIES ESTABLISHED DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS TWO YEARS AGO (CSM).

11. WSJ'S PEARLSTINE REPORTS THAT JAPANESE SHIPBUILDERS ARE LOSING THEIR COMPETITIVE EDGE DUE TO PRICE RISES STEMMING FROM 30 PERCENT WAGE BOOST AND SPIRALLING RISE IN MATERIAL COSTS. TO BLUNT EFFECT OF RISING COSTS, MANY COMPANIES INVESTING IN SHIPBUILDING IN DEVELOPING NATIONS.

12. MINOR EARTHQUAKE HITS PART OF JAPAN, INCLUDING TOKYO. EPICENTER LOCATED 25 MILES UNDER PACIFIC, EAST OF HACHIJO-JIMA ISLAND (UPI, CHITRIB).

MALAYSIA

13. RAZAK'S PRO-WESTERN, PRO-MALAY NATIONAL FRONT WINS LANDSLIDE VICTORY (AP; CHITRIB; WSJ); 120 FRONT CANDIDATES ELECTED TO 154-SEAT FEDERAL PARLIAMENT. ALL 11 STATE ASSEMBLIES ON MALAYSIAN PENINSULA WON BY FRONT AS WELL. RETURNS FROM SARAWAK TO COME IN OVER NEXT TWO WEEKS. SABAH NOT TO HAVE ELECTION UNTIL '76 (AP PHINQ, SUN).

BUT NYT'S SCHANBERG, IN KL, SAYS OVERWHELMING WIN HAS NOT REMOVED RACIALISM FROM MALAYSIA'S POLITICAL LIFE. ELECTION LEFT MILITANT, CHINESE-

ORIENTED DEMOCRATIC ACTION PARTY AS ONLY ALTERNATIVE TO PRESENT GOVT, FACT WHICH COULD LEAD TO POLITICAL POLARIZATION. RETURNS SHOW DAP HOLDING ONLY 9 SEATS, SAME AS IN LAST PARLIAMENT.

THAILAND

14. WP'S BURGESS, IN BANGKOK, REPORTS SANYA'S FEAR OF CREATING VIOLENT CIVIL DISTURBANCES BEHIND GOVT'S FAILURE TO CALL OUT POLICE AGAINST ILLEGALLY UNCLASSIFIED

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STRIKING WORKERS. UNDER THAI LABOR LAWS, TRADE UNIONS ILLEGAL AND LENGTHY NEGOTIATIONS REQUIRED BEFORE WORK STOPPAGE. LATEST ILLEGAL STRIKE AGAINST LUXURIOUS SIAM INTERNATIONAL HOTEL. HOTEL MANAGEMENT GAVE IN TO DEMANDS FOR INCREASED WAGES AND REMOVAL OF 2 OF 6 EXECUTIVES WORKERS WANTED OUSTED. MANY LABOR SPECIALISTS FORESEE FORMATION OF TRADE UNIONS WITHIN YEAR OR TWO. BURGESS CONCLUDES UNIONS COULD HELP STABILIZE LABOR SITUATION.

AUSTRALIA

15. LAT'S LAMB, IN SYDNEY, CITES AUSTRALIAN SENATE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMITTEE REPORT THAT SECURITIES MARKET RIDDLED WITH FRAUD, MALPRACTICE, AND ABUSES REQUIRING "FUNDAMENTAL REFORM." CHARGES FLAGRANT VIOLATION OF PUBLIC TRUST, PARTICULARLY BY MINING COMPANIES, GROUP RESPONSIBLE FOR TRIGGERING RECENT MARKET BOOM THAT BURST, LEAVING MARKET INDEX AT 7-YEAR LOW (WP).

PHILIPPINES

16. WSJ'S HARTLEY, IN MANILA, REPORTS THAT THOUGH CONGRESS' REFUSAL TO EXTEND SUGAR ACT -- GIVING FOREIGN NATIONS GUARANTEED SHARE OF US MARKET -- STUNNED PHILIPPINES, NOW THINGS DON'T LOOK SO DIM. PHILIPPINE SUGAR ASSN. BELIEVES THEY CAN HOLD SHARE OF US MARKET. AND IF NOT, SELLERS COULD CONCENTRATE ON JAPANESE MARKET CLOSER TO HOME. WORLDWIDE DEMAND AND PRICE FOR SUGAR ARE UP.

FRENCH A-TEST

17. AUSTRALIA AND NZ REPORT THAT FRANCE HAS EXPLODED ANOTHER NUCLEAR DEVICE OVER MURUROA, EITHER 6TH OR 7TH THIS YEAR. KIRK EXPRESSES HOPE THIS WILL BE LAST TEST; WILLESEE, IN ANNOUNCEMENT OF TEST CALLS IT VIOLATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW. AS

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USUAL, FRANCE REFUSES COMMENT (UPI PHINQ, NYDN;
WP; CHITRIB; WSJ).

SUN'S PULLAN NOTES GISCARD D'ESTAING'S PROMISE
THAT FUTURE TESTS WILL BE UNDERGROUND HAS ADDED QUALIFICA-
TION "WITHIN THE LIMITS OF THE POSSIBLE." NYT
REPORTS FRENCH DEFMIN SOUFFLET CONFIRMED IN TV INTERVIEW
THAT 6TH EXPLOSION WOULD BE "ONE OF THE LAST," CITING

COMING CHANGE IN WEATHER CONDITIONS AS REASON.

COMMENT AND ANALYSIS

WORLD POPULATION CONFERENCE

18. NYT CHARACTERIZES AS "DEMAGOGY" USSR REP AT BUCHAREST
CONFERENCE MINIMIZING CONCERN OVER POPULATION GROWTH
AS SOME KIND OF IMPERIALISTIC FAKERY, AND PRC REP NOT
ONLY BRANDING CONTROL EFFORTS AS "EXPLOITATION" OF
POOR NATIONS, BUT URGING LARGER POPULATION IN THIRD-
WORLD AS "CONDITION FOR THE FIGHT AGAINST IMPERIALISM
AND HEGEMONISM" (TERM OF DENUNCIATION RESERVED FOR
SOVIET COMMUNIST COMPETITOR).

EDIT NOTES ARGUMENT MADE BY SOME THIRD-WORLD STATESMEN
THEMSELVES IS THAT SOLUTION FOR POPULATION PROBLEMS
LIES SOLELY IN INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT. WHAT THIS
LEAVES OUT OF ACCOUNT, ACCORDING NYT, IS THAT MORTALITY
RATE IN EUROPE WAS REDUCED VERY SLOWLY OVER THE CENTURY,
WHILE IN ASIA, AFRICA AND SA IT HAS BEEN REDUCED ABRUPTLY
AND IN MANY CASES WELL IN ADVANCE OF ECON DEVELOPMENT.
THAT, TOO, HAS BEEN PART OF WESTERN "EXPLOITATION"
OF THIRD-WORLD. WOULD RUSSIANS AND CHINESE UNDO THAT
CONTRIBUTION? IF NOT, THEY MUST EITHER HELP IN ANY
COMPENSATING PROGRAM TO REDUCE BIRTH RATE OF THOSE
COUNTRIES OR STAND BY AND WATCH INCREASE IN NUMBERS
THAT CAN ONLY WRECK ALL ATTEMPTS TO RAISE THEIR STANDARD
OF LIVING.

19. NYT'S GLADWIN HILL, IN BUCHAREST, ALSO NOTING
OPPOSING VIEWPOINTS ON POPULATION CONTROL BETWEEN
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ADVANCED NATIONS AND LDC, INCLUDING CHINA, THINKS
CONFERENCE'S PROJECTED PRODUCT - "WORLD PLAN OF ACTION" -
WOULD INEVITABLY END UP AS AMBIGUOUS DOCUMENT THAT
WOULD GIVE LESS SUPPORT TO LIMITING POPULATION THAN
TO ECON INNOVATIONS BEYOND SCOPE OF CONFERENCE.

20. REFERRING TO PRC AND USSR POSITION AGAINST POPULATION CONTROL AT CONFERENCE, NYDN SAYS: "MAYBE THE SOVIETS AND RED CHINESE WANT MORE BODIES FOR SOLDIERS, COME THE DAY THEY DECIDE TO KNOCK EACH OTHER OUT. OR DO THEY WANT POOR COUNTRIES TO PRODUCE SO MANY CHILDREN THAT THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONS WILL GO BROKE TRYING TO FEED THEM? NEITHER COMMUNIST NATION OFFERS FOOD FOR THE POOR AND HUNGRY COUNTRIES. THAT'S THE JOB, WE SUPPOSE, OF THE INEFFICIENT, DECADENT CAPITALISTS."

INDOCHINA

21. WP PUBLISHES THREE MORE READER REACTIONS TO ITS AUG 11 EDITORIAL SUPPORTING CONTINUED AID TO SVN; ALL REGISTER OPPOSITION.

GENERAL

22. IN FIRST OF SERIES, NYDN'S SCIENCE EDITOR, EDWARD

EDELSON, WRITES ABOUT DIFFUSION OF ATOMIC KNOW-HOW. NOTES ONLY SIX NATIONS KNOWN TO HAVE BUILT NUCLEAR WEAPONS: US, USSR, UK, FRANCE, PRC, INDIA. ONLY FIVE OTHERS, INCLUDING JAPAN, BELIEVED TO HAVE CAPABILITY FOR SEPARATING PLUTONIUM FROM URANIUM, AND EACH HAS AT LEAST ONE REACTOR, WHICH MEANS EACH CAN PRODUCE BOMB-GRADE MATERIAL WITH OWN RESOURCES. LIST OF NATIONS WITH REACTORS IS LONGER. THERE ARE 131 NUCLEAR GENERATING PLANTS IN 18 COUNTRIES; THERE ARE PLANS FOR MORE THAN 340 POWER-PRODUCING REACTORS IN 41 NATIONS. AT LEAST 50 NATIONS HAVE SMALLER RESEARCH REACTORS. COUNTRIES ON LIST INCLUDE KOREA, THAILAND, INDONESIA, SVN.

23. SHACKFORD (SUN) EXPRESSES VIEW THAT NIXON LEGACY IN UNCLASSIFIED

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FOREIGN AFFAIRS DOES NOT DESERVE KUDOS EX-PRES AND HIS DIE-HARD SUPPORTERS CLAIM. RE OPENING TO CHINA, SAYS MANNER IN WHICH IT CAME ABOUT IS NOT NECESSARILY WAY NIXON DESCRIBES IT - HIS IDEA AND INITIATIVE. CONTENTS THERE IS SOME EVIDENCE INITIATIVE CAME FROM PEKING, BECAUSE OF CHINA'S QUARREL WITH USSR, AND THAT NIXON WISELY TOOK ADVANTAGE OF IT. NOTES WAR GOES ON IN VN AND CAMBODIA DESPITE "PEACE IS AT HAND" CLAIM ON EVE OF NIXON'S 1972 ELECTION VICTORY.

AMONG ISSUES ON WHICH ANY OBJECTIVE OBSERVERS MUST GIVE NIXON LOW MARKS, SAYS SHACKFORD, ARE: "SHOCKS" ADMINISTERED JAPAN (NO ADVANCE WARNING ABOUT NEW US POLICY TOWARD PRC AND NO WARNING ON MONETARY AND TARIFF

CHANGES THAT SEVERELY DISRUPTED JAPAN'S ECONOMY WHICH
WAS DEPENDENT ON TRADE WITH US); UNQUESTIONING SUPPORT
OF MIL DICTATORSHIPS, INCLUDING KOREAN. CLAIMS REPRESSION
PORTENDS DIPLOMATIC DISASTER IN KOREA WHERE STABILITY
IS SO DEPENDENT ON REASONABLE WORKING RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN JAPAN AND KOREA AND RESPECT AND TRUST IN BOTH
COUNTRIES FOR US. KISSINGER

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